

(c) The Administrative Law Judge shall enter a summary decision for either party if the pleadings, affidavits, material obtained by discovery or otherwise, or matters officially noticed show that there is no genuine issue as to any material fact and that a party is entitled to summary decision.

(d) *Form of summary decisions.* Any final order entered as a summary decision shall conform to the requirements for all final orders. A final order made under this section shall include a statement of:

(1) Findings of fact and conclusions of law, and the reasons therefor, on all issues presented; and

(2) Any terms and conditions of the final order.

(e) *Hearings on issue of fact.* Where a genuine question of material fact is raised, the Administrative Law Judge shall set the case for an evidentiary hearing.

[Order No. 2203-99, 64 FR 7078, Feb. 12, 1999]

#### § 68.39 Formal hearings.

(a) *Public.* Hearings shall be open to the public. The Administrative Law Judge may order a hearing or any part thereof closed, where to do so would be in the best interests of the parties, a witness, the public, or other affected persons. Any order closing the hearing shall set forth the reasons for the decision. Any objections thereto shall be made a part of the record.

(b) *Jurisdiction.* The Administrative Law Judge shall have jurisdiction to decide all issues of fact and related issues of law.

(c) *Rights of parties.* Every party shall have the right of timely notice and all other rights essential to a fair hearing, including, but not limited to, the right to present evidence, to conduct such cross-examination as may be necessary for a full and complete disclosure of the facts, and to be heard by objection, motion, and argument.

(d) *Rights of participation.* Every party shall have the right to make a written or oral statement of position. At the discretion of the Administrative Law Judge, participants may file proposed findings of fact, conclusions of law, and a post hearing brief.

(e) *Amendments to conform to the evidence.* When issues not raised by the re-

quest for hearing, prehearing stipulation, or prehearing order are tried by express or implied consent of the parties, they shall be treated in all respects as if they had been raised in the pleadings. Such amendment of the pleadings as may be necessary to cause them to conform to the evidence may be made on motion of any party at any time; but failure to so amend does not affect the result of the hearing of these issues. The Administrative Law Judge may grant a continuance to enable the objecting party to meet such evidence.

[54 FR 48596, Nov. 24, 1989. Redesignated by Order No. 1534-91, 56 FR 50053, Oct. 3, 1991]

#### § 68.40 Evidence.

(a) *Applicability of Federal rules of evidence.* Unless otherwise provided by statute or these rules, the Federal Rules of Evidence will be a general guide to all proceedings held pursuant to these rules.

(b) *Admissibility.* All relevant material and reliable evidence is admissible, but may be excluded if its probative value is substantially outweighed by unfair prejudice or confusion of the issues, or by considerations of undue delay, waste of time, immateriality, or needless presentation of cumulative evidence. Stipulations of fact may be introduced in evidence with respect to any issue. Every party shall have the right to present his/her case or defense by oral or documentary evidence, depositions, and duly authenticated copies of records and documents; to submit rebuttal evidence; and to conduct such reasonable cross-examination as may be required for a full and true disclosure of the facts. The Administrative Law Judge shall have the right in his/her discretion to limit the number of witnesses whose testimony may be merely cumulative and shall, as a matter of policy, not only exclude irrelevant, immaterial, or unduly repetitious evidence but shall also limit the cross-examination of witnesses to reasonable bounds so as not to prolong the hearing unnecessarily, and unduly burden the record. Material and relevant evidence shall not be excluded because it is not the best evidence, unless its authenticity is challenged, in which case reasonable time shall be given to establish its authenticity. When only portions of

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a document are to be relied upon, the offering party shall prepare the pertinent excerpts, adequately identified, and shall supply copies of such excerpts, together with a statement indicating the purpose for which such materials will be offered, to the Administrative Law Judge and to the other parties. Only the excerpts, so prepared and submitted, shall be received in the record. However, the original document should be made available for examination and for use by opposing counsel for purposes of cross-examination. Compilations, charts, summaries of data, and photostatic copies of documents may be admitted in evidence if the proceedings will thereby be expedited, and if the material upon which they are based is available for examination by the parties.

(c) *Objections to evidence.* Objections to the admission or exclusion of evidence shall be in short form, stating the grounds of objections relied upon, and to the extent permitted by the Administrative Law Judge, the transcript shall include argument or debate thereon. Rulings on such objections shall be made at the time of objection or prior to the receipt of further evidence. Such ruling shall be a part of the record.

(d) *Exceptions.* Formal exceptions to the rulings of the Administrative Law Judge made during the course of the hearing are unnecessary. For all purposes for which an exception otherwise would be taken, it is sufficient that a party, at the time the ruling of the Administrative Law Judge is made or sought, makes known the action he/she desires the Administrative Law Judge to take or his/her objection to an action taken, and his/her grounds therefor.

(e) *Offers of proof.* Any offer of proof made in connection with an objection taken to any ruling of the Administrative Law Judge rejecting or excluding proffered oral testimony shall consist of a statement of the substance of the evidence which counsel contends would be adduced by such testimony, and, if the excluded evidence consists of evidence in documentary or written form or of reference to documents or records, a copy of such evidence shall

be marked for identification and shall constitute the offer of proof.

[54 FR 48596, Nov. 24, 1989. Redesignated by Order No. 1534-91, 56 FR 50053, Oct. 3, 1991]

## § 68.41 Official notice.

Official notice may be taken of any material fact, not appearing in evidence in the record, which is among the traditional matters of judicial notice. Provided, however, that the parties shall be given adequate notice, at the hearing or by reference in the Administrative Law Judge's decision, of the matters so noticed, and shall be given adequate opportunity to show the contrary.

[54 FR 48596, Nov. 24, 1989. Redesignated by Order No. 1534-91, 56 FR 50053, Oct. 3, 1991]

## § 68.42 In camera and protective orders.

(a) *Privileged communications.* Upon application of any person, the Administrative Law Judge may limit discovery or introduction of evidence or enter such protective or other orders as in the Judge's judgment may be consistent with the objective of protecting privileged communications and of protecting data and other material the disclosure of which would unreasonably prejudice a party, witness, or third party.

(b) *Classified or sensitive matter.* (1) Without limiting the discretion of the Administrative Law Judge to give effect to any other applicable privilege, it shall be proper for the Administrative Law Judge to limit discovery or introduction of evidence or to enter such protective or other orders as in the Judge's judgment may be consistent with the objective of preventing undue disclosure of classified or sensitive matter. When the Administrative Law Judge determines that information in documents containing sensitive matter should be made available the Judge may direct the producing party to prepare an unclassified or non-sensitive summary or extract of the original. The summary or extract may be admitted as evidence in the record.

(2) If the Administrative Law Judge determines that this procedure is inadequate and that classified or otherwise sensitive matter must form part of the